United Nations S/PRST/2003/8

Security Council

Distr.: General
19 June 2003

Original: English

Statement by the President of the Security Council

At the 4776th meeting of the Security Council, held on 19 June 2003, in connection with the Council's consideration of the item entitled "The situation in Guinea-Bissau", the President of the Security Council made the following statement on behalf of the Council:

"The Security Council, recalling its previous statements on Guinea-Bissau, including the statement of its President of 29 November 2000 (S/PRST/2000/37), having considered the report of the Secretary-General on developments in Guinea-Bissau and on the activities of the United Nations Peace-Building Support Office in that country (S/2003/621), and anticipating the Council mission to Guinea-Bissau, expresses its concern with regard to the fragile political sit tion in Guinea-Bissau, to the persistent economic and social crisis and to continuing disturbing information regarding the human rights situation. It urges the country's leaders and the international community to work more purposefully together to ensure that the development, humanitarian and peace-building agendas are quickly put back on track.

"The Security Council appeals to the President and Government of Guinea-Bissau to timely and effectively organize the forthcoming legislative elections and to ensure that these elections are conducted in a transparent, fair and credible manner, in accordance with the Constitution and the electoral law. It is the Council's expectation that candidates as well as political parties will not be subjected to violence and intimidation, and that the presence of international observers at these elections will be acceptable to all parties. The Council also expresses the hope that following the successful conduct of the elections, the Government will embark on additional concrete measures to show further proof of its commitment to democracy and the rule of law by promulgating the new Constitution and by having the President and Vice-President of the Supreme Court duly elected without further delay.

"The Security Council calls on the Government of Guinea-Bissau to take the necessary steps to facilitate a constructive dialogue with the international community and the Bretton Woods institutions and to fully endorse the partnership approach defined by the ad hoc advisory group of the United Nations Economic and Social Council on Guinea-Bissau.

"The Security Council appeals to the donor community to contribute financially to the implementation of the political and economical process in Guinea-Bissau, including necessary support for the legislative elections.

03-40196 (E) 190603

"The Security Council expresses its concern with regard to the situation of human rights and civil liberties, and urges the Government of Guinea-Bissau to take the necessary measures in order to improve this situation. It stresses the importance that freedom of speech and freedom of the press be fully respected.

"The Security Council acknowledges the importance of the regional dimension in the solution of the problems faced by Guinea-Bissau and, in that regard, calls on the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Organization of Portuguese Speaking African Countries (PALOPS) to further strengthen their involvement and expresses its intention to intensify its cooperation with these organizations.

"The Security Council welcomes the willingness of President Kumba Yala to host negotiations on the issue of Casamance and appeals to him to continue to cooperate constructively with the Government of Senegal in order to contribute to a solution of this issue.

"The Security Council recognizes and commends the important role played by the Representative of the Secretary-General as well as by the United Nations country team towards helping consolidate peace, democracy and the rule of law, and expresses its appreciation for their activities.

"The Security Council expresses its full support to the forthcoming mission to Guinea-Bissau, to be led by the Permanent Representative of Mexico, and which will be the first part of an overall mission to West Africa, and looks forward to its conclusions and recommendations.

"The Security Council expresses its intention to keep the situation in Guinea-Bissau under regular review."